

**SUMMARY OF THE
TRANSITION COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 29, 2000**

The Transition Committee of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) met by teleconference on Thursday, March 29, 2000 at 4 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST). The meeting was led by the committee's co-chair, Ms. Carol Batterton of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission (TNRCC) and Dr. Charles Brokopp of the Utah Department of Health. A list of action items is given in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the issues contained on the committee's agenda. A packet of materials prepared for this meeting did not get to members of the committee prior to the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS

Minutes from the March 2, 2000 meetings were reviewed briefly but not approved since several members had not received the minutes. Approval of minutes postponed until next meeting.

Follow up with ECOS. No arrangements have been made to have one or more representatives from NELAP attend the ECOS meeting in Philadelphia on April 10-12. Mr. Robert Roberts, ECOS Executive Director, noted that NELAC could request that one or more representatives attend this meeting and make a presentation on NELAC.

Council of State Governments (CSG). Dr. Brokopp has contacted Mr. Robert "Bob" Silvanik, Deputy Director for Policy, at CSG to explore possible options for working with CSG on environmental laboratory accreditation issues. An invitation was extended to have Mr. Silvanik or some other person from CSG participate in a subsequent Transition Committee teleconference. The Environmental Policy Group at CSG would likely be interested in working with NELAC since one of CSG's projects involves the improvement of environmental data. Additional information on CSG can be found at the following address:
<http://www.statesnews.org/aboutcsg/aboutcsg.html>

Response from EPA/ORD - Future of NELAC. Dr. Pearson received a response from Dr. Norine Noonan, Office of Research and Development, EPA dated March 22, 2000. A copy of the letter was made available to committee members and briefly discussed with the committee. The letter was a response the February 17 letter that was sent to Mr. McCabe, Deputy Administrator, EPA. The letter restates EPA's support for NELAC, and encourages NELAC to "broaden operational and financial responsibility" for the program. EPA plans to continue to be a partner with NELAC, but would like to see the Board develop one or more options for "putting NELAC on a path to financial self-sufficiency."

An estimate of what the Accrediting Authorities, states and laboratories have and are spending to implement NELAP might be useful. The EPA contribution to NELAC, is very important, however the contribution by the states and laboratories far exceeds that from EPA. Other Federal

agencies will also benefit from NELAP, however their contributions have been less than that received from EPA. EPA currently does not have a statutory mandate to operate an broad environmental laboratory accreditation program. The committee would like to obtain information on how much and for what the EPA contribution is currently supporting.

The Transition Committee will continue to work on options for long term support for NELAC. A recommendation will be developed for the Board. The Board will be encouraged to have some preliminary discussion with ORD/EPA prior to the annual meeting in Williamsburg in June.

Review List of Options. The committee's list of possible options was reviewed and a shorter list of options was identified.

NELAP Implementation Issues. Within NELAP, only two states (NY, NJ) offer some version on CLP accreditation. The version CLP standards used by each program and the data package requirements vary. The New Jersey program will not accept CLP accreditation offered by the New York program. New York would likely accept New Jersey accreditation. The broader issue is the slightly different requirements that are used by the Accrediting Authorities. A workgroup within ELAB, chaired by Mr. Parr, is currently reviewing this problem and is looking at 4-5 alternative options for resolving this important issue. A report will be presented to ELAB within the next month. This is a critical issue that needs to be presented to the Board. Some laboratories are concerned that they will still need to go to several states to obtain accreditation if the accrediting authorities are unable to resolve the differences and fully implement reciprocity.

Agenda for Annual Meeting - NELAC VI - June 28, 2000 9-12:30. The following are topics that will be considered for the Transition Committee meeting in Williamsburg on June 28.

1. Update EPA Support for NELAC
2. Committee Membership
3. Fields of Testing - Mr. Parr
4. Report from Accrediting Authority Workgroup
5. PT recommendations to Board and Accrediting Authorities

Next meetings: April 20, 2000 4pm EDT
May 18, 2000 4pm EDT

Action Items
Transition Committee Meeting
March 29, 2000

Item No.	Action	Date to be Completed
1.	Dr. Brokopp will arrange for a representative from CSG to participate in next conference call	Dr. Brokopp
2.	Ms. Batterton will request a break-out of the EPA support for NELAC	Ms. Batterton
3.	Update list of options	Dr. Brokopp
4.	Discuss the NELAP implementation issue and the role of Accrediting Authority workgroup with Board	Dr. Brokopp
5.	Schedule the next committee teleconferences for Thursday, April 20 at 4 p.m. (EDT) and Thursday, May 18 at 4 p.m. (EDT)	Ms. Batterton

Participants
Transition Committee Meeting
March 29, 2000

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